



NEWS RELEASE



*For Immediate Release
Award winners' bios available*

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SBA and S.C. Coalition for Small Business & Entrepreneurship Announce Winners of 2007 Small Business Awards

Winners to be Honored at Salute to Small Business April 11

COLUMBIA –The South Carolina District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration, the S.C. Coalition for Small Business & Entrepreneurship, and the S.C. Chamber of Commerce will present the 2007 Small Business Awards April 11 at the Salute to Small Business to be held at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

Amanda Somers, Lance Owens, and Darlene Pope of Sports, Spine & Industrial, Inc. in Greer will be named the state's 2007 Small Business Persons of the Year.

Deborah Gause of AccuStat EMR in Myrtle Beach will be recognized as runner-up for the Small Business Person of the Year.

Robby Hill of HillSouth LLC in Florence will be recognized as the Young Entrepreneur of the Year; Hill, 24, is also the Young Entrepreneur for the eight-state Southeast region.

Patrick King of Local Economic Development LLC in Charleston will be honored as Small Business Financial Services Champion of the Year.

The SBA South Carolina District Director Special Award honorees are:

- **D. Delores Logan of AllCaregivers, Inc. in Lexington** – *Minority Small Business Entrepreneur of the Year*
- **J.M. "Mickey" Conway of the Clemson University Upper Savannah Small Business Development Center (SBDC) office in Greenwood** – *Small Business Partner of the Year*

The winners of the 2007 South Carolina Collegiate Entrepreneurship Award program, sponsored by the Clemson University Spiro Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, will also be honored:

- Clemson University sophomore **Armen Amirkhanian** of **Entropy Studios and Exergy Properties** – *First place*
- USC International Master of Business Administration candidate **Shaun Abraham** of **Dirty South Productions** – *Runner-up*

“We are celebrating the impact every South Carolina small business has on our state’s economy, our nation’s economy and the global economy. And we’re recognizing the advocates who support our small businesses and the lenders who finance them,” Elliott Cooper, SBA South Carolina District Director, said.

The keynote speaker will be Robert Harrell, Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives.

Without lending partners to provide financing, many of South Carolina’s small businesses would not have adequate opportunity to prosper. For that reason, officials will recognize the state’s top lending institutions for the 2006 fiscal year:

- **Number of 7(a) Loans Approved**
 1. Bank of America, N.A.
 2. Innovative Bank
 3. Capital One, FSB
- **Dollar Amount of 7(a) Loans Approved**
 1. Business Development Corporation
 2. CIT Small Business Lending
 3. BB&T
- **Number of 504 Loans Approved**
 1. Certified Development Corporation
 2. Appalachian Development Corporation
 3. Catawba Regional Development Corporation
 3. Provident Business Financial Services, Inc.
- **Dollar Amount of Approved 504 Loans**
 1. Certified Development Corporation
 2. Appalachian Development Corporation
 3. Catawba Regional Development Corporation
- **Top Lender Third Party 504 Loans**
 1. First Citizens Bank & Trust Company, Inc.

The Salute to Small Business is open to the public and will take place at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., ending with a legislative reception until 6:00 p.m. The program will begin with the SBA Awards luncheon featuring keynote speaker Robert Harrell, Speaker of the S.C. House of Representatives. Following the luncheon will be two small business workshops and two pre-scheduled small business matchmaking sessions with federal, state and local government buyers. The event brings legislators in contact with their small business constituents and provides them a chance to speak one-on-one.

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